

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 L-02 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /042 W
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R 041529Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6383

INFO AMCONSUL NICE

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, FR

SUBJECT: PANAM/TWA ROUTE SWAP

REF: STATE 24551

1. NOTE SENT TO FOREIGN MINISTRY FEB. 4 PURSUANT REFTEL INSTRUCTION. WE HAVE INFORMED BOTH TWA AND PANAM OF THAT DEMARCHE.

2. PANAM INFORMED US FEB. 3 INSTRUCTIONS HAD BEEN RECEIVED FROM HOME OFFICE TO SUSPEND SERVICE TO FRANCE EFFECTIVE MARCH 2 FOLLOWING CAB DECISION ON ROUTE SWAP. THEY INQUIRED OF EMBASSY WHAT FORMAL ACTION THEY SHOULD NOW TAKE VIS-A-VIS GOF CIVAIR AUTHORITIES. WE RESPONDED THAT WE ASSUMED ONLY ACTION WOULD BE LETTER TO SGAC FOR SUSPENSION EFFECTIVE MARCH 2 OF PANAM WINTER SCHEDULE THAT HAD BEEN FILED WITH SGAC. WE CHECKED SUBSEQUENTLY WITH SGAC AND WERE TOLD THAT WHILE THERE WAS RULE FOR THIRTY DAY ADVANCE FILING OF SCHEDULE CHANGES (AS WELL AS TARIFFS), SGAC WAS PREPARED BE FLEXIBLE AND WOULD NOT INSIST ON THIRTY DAY DEADLINE BEING MET. SGAC OFFICIALS (ESPEROU AND THOMASSET) EXPRESSED REGRET AT SEEING PANAM SUSPEND SCHEDULED SERVICES.

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3. WHEN WE INFORMED PANAM MORNING OF FEB. 4 RE ABOVE CONVERSATION WITH SGAC AS WELL AS DISPATCH OUR NOTE TO FOREIGN MINISTRY, PANAM INDICATED THAT MARCH 2 DATE FOR SUSPENSION OF SERVICE MAY STILL NOT BE FINAL. WE INDICATED THAT IN OUR VIEW SGAC SHOULD BE FORMALLY NOTIFIED BY PANAM OF SUSPENSION OF SCHEDULE ONLY WHEN DECISION ON EFFECTIVE DATE WAS INDEED FINAL, BUT QUESTION ON HOW IT WANTED TO PLAY THIS WAS OF COURSE UP TO PANAM TO DECIDE.

4. IN ALERTING CLAUDE-LAFONTAINE OF FOREIGN MINISTRY AND ESPEROU TO IMMINENT RECEIPT OF OUR NOTE TO FOREIGN MINISTRY, WE STRESSED THAT CAB-AUTHORIZED SUSPENSION OF PANAM SERVICE WAS ONLY TEMPORARY AND THAT PANAM "OF COURSE" REMAINED A DESIGNATED CARRIER. NEITHER DEMURRED. COMMENT: AT PRESENT TIME WE THEREFORE THINK IT UNLIKELY GOF WILL PROPOSE WITHDRAWAL OF PANAM DESIGNATION (PARA 2 REFTTEL).

5. ESPEROU ASKED WHETHER DECISION ON ROUTE SWAP AND TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF SERVICE WAS FINAL, SINCE HE HAD UNDERSTOOD THAT CAB ACTION MIGHT REQUIRE ENDORSEMENT OF HIGHER AUTHORITY WITHIN USG. WE SAID WE ASSUMED DECISION WAS FINAL IN VIEW OF OUR RECEIPT OF INSTRUCTION TO SO INFORM GOF OFFICIALLY, BUT WE WOULD QUERY DEPT. ON THIS POINT. PLEASE ADVISE.

6. NICHOLS, TWA'S GENERAL MANAGER FOR FRANCE, INFORMS US THAT TWA PLANS NO INCREASE IN CAPACITY IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING SUSPENSION PANAM SERVICE. NICHOLS EXPLAINED THAT TWA ESTIMATES IT WILL BE DOING WELL IF IT CAN PICK UP 200 PASSENGERS ON PEAK DAYS AND

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110 PASSENGERS ON OTHER DAYS FROM TRAFFIC NOW TRAVELING IN AND OUT OF FRANCE VIA PANAM. (HE NOTED THAT TO DEAL WITH ITS OWN INCREASED WORKLOAD AS A RESULT OF SUSPENSION OF PANAM SERVICE, TWA EXPECTS TO HAVE TO ADD ONLY TWO EMPLOYEES TO ITS SALES AND RESERVATIONS STAFF, "WHICH SAYS MUCH ABOUT THE PRESENT DUPLICATION OF EFFORTS BETWEEN OUR TWO COMPANIES IN PARIS", NICHOLS REMARKED.) TWA EXPECTS TO GAIN IN ALL \$7-8 MILLION IN PASSENGER TRAFFIC REVENUE. IN ADDITION TO THE TWICE WEEKLY NICE FLIGHTS (PARA 3 REFTEL), HE SAID TWA ALSO PLANS IN ITS SPRING SCHEDULE TO INAUGURATE NON-STOP SERVICE TO WASHINGTON, DC AND ALSO A MID-AFTERNOON FLIGHT TO NEW YORK, BUT HE ADDED THAT THESE HAD BEEN TENTATIVELY PLANNED ANYWAY REGARDLESS OF OUTCOME OF ROUTE SWAP DECISION.

7. SINCE JAN. 15 TWA HAS BEEN OPERATING 5 CARGO FLIGHTS A WEEK THROUGH PARIS. WITH SUSPENSION OF PANAM'S SCHEDULED CARGO SERVICE, TWA PLANS TO INCREASE ITS CARGO FREQUENCIES TO ELEVEN FLIGHTS WEEKLY BY MEANS OF ADDITION OF ONE DAILY FLIGHT.

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